

Blues boosted by late goals

WYCOMBE WANDERERS 3, DAGENHAM 0

WYCOMBE WANDERERS completed the 'double' over Dagenham on Tuesday evening with a second-half performance that was as good as anything seen from the side this season. This was a timely win, because the Blues and the Daggers are locked in a struggle for the runners-up spot in the Isthmian League behind Enfield. After the result Wycombe are one point ahead of Dagenham with a game in hand.

The first half was fairly even, but with Wanderers perhaps marginally on top, as five corners to nil indicate.

John Priestley, back in his familiar midfield role after a few unsettled games in the back four had a fine game, and was well supported by Graham Mackenzie alongside, and Alan Phillips at the back.

Dagenham's best chance of the half came on 20 minutes, when a poor back pass from Derek Harris never looked like reaching Richard Strong, but Joe Dunwell, who had nipped in to intercept, shot high over the bar.

Mackenzie, Dylan Evans and Harris worked well on the Wycombe right, but too often the final pass went astray. Harris never stopped working, and caused Norman Welch constant trouble in the heart of the Dagenham defence.

Five minutes before the interval, Evans went close for Wycombe from an acute angle, making Huttley save with his feet. Harris's follow-up shot was blocked by Neville Fox, the tall Dagenham striker, who was often called on to help in defence.

Going into the second half, no-one could have foreseen the goal-rush that was to come from the Wanderers — in fact, what attacking moves there were fizzled out at either end.

On 62 minutes, Holfield went down after receiving a very hard Welch clearance full in the face, and from that moment Wycombe put all their hard work to good effect.

Holfield started to attack with his strikers, and apart from a rare Dagenham attack when Fox shot straight at Maskell, made sure that the Daggers' defence went through its roughest patch.

The scoring was opened after 72 minutes. Tony Horseman's

cross found Holfield facing the wrong way, but a quick turn and superb ball-control gave him the half-chance he needed, and a low hard shot from six yards gave Huttley no chance.

On 77 minutes Dagenham substituted Jim Holden with John Mitchell, and surprisingly, Wycombe brought Howard Kennedy on for Tony Horseman. This move put Wanderers into a dangerous 4-4-2 situation, and in theory at least, made Dagenham's task a good deal easier, with the Wycombe strike-force being cut to two. But in the event, the gamble paid off, and although the Daggers forced their very first corner of the match on 78 minutes, Wanderers went further ahead five minutes later.

After 83 minutes, Holfield sent a high through ball to Harris which dropped literally inches in front of the striker's feet. With Huttley coming out fast, Harris coolly lobbed over him to score a copybook goal.

Three minutes later, Keith Mead headed only inches over, but in the 88th minute, Holfield again had a hand in the third Wycombe goal. From just inside the Dagenham half, 'Holly' sent a slide-rule pass across the park which Evans cleverly let run through to Kennedy on the right. Howard slipped it to Mackenzie who was coming up fast outside him, and 'Jock' fired a vicious shot, all along the ground from 15 yards, which passed just inside Huttley's post.

WYCOMBE: J. Maskell, P. Birdseye, R. Strong, K. Mead, A. Phillips, J. Priestley, G. Mackenzie, M. Holfield, D. Harris, D. Evans, A. Horseman (H. Kennedy 77 mins).

DAGENHAM: I. Huttley, P. Wellman, T. Scates, J. Dunwell, N. Welch, D. Moore, M. Harkins, J. Borland, N. Fox, T. Harris, J. Holden, J. Mitchell (77 mins).

Scorers: Holfield (72 mins), Harris (83 mins), Mackenzie (88 mins).

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